MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
19 September 1962

AM
9:30 I. CONVENE, ROOM 7000, INTERIOR DEPARTMENT BUILDING

II. SUBMISSIONS-REVIEWS-INTERVIEWS

9:35 1. General Services Administration, Public Buildings Service

a. National Air Museum, Adams and Jefferson Drives between 4th and 6th Streets, on the Mall - Preliminary Studies
(Mr. J. Rowland Snyder, Acting Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Design and Construction, GSA, PBS; Mr. James Bradley, Assistant Secretary, Smithsonian Institution; Mr. Phillip Hopkins, Director, National Air Museum)

b. Federal Triangle, Internal Revenue Building, South Courtyard, Proposed Cooling Tower - Revised Design
(Mr. J. Rowland Snyder, Acting Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Design and Construction, GSA, PBS)

10:15 2. Pan American Health Organization Headquarters Building Square 59, Virginia Avenue, 22d and 23d Streets, N.W.
(Mr. Roman Fresnedo Sira, Architect; Mr. Louis Justement, Architect)
Further Development of Designs

10:30 3. National Cultural Center Board

National Cultural Center - Revised Plans
(Mr. Edward Durell Stone, Architect; Mr. Jarold A. Kieffer, Secretary, National Cultural Center; Mr. Roger Stephens, Chairman, Board of Trustees, National Cultural Center; Mr. Corrin Strong, Vice-Chairman; Mr. Ralph Becker, Member, Board of Trustees and National Cultural Center Counsel)

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MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
S EPTEMBER 19, 1962

The Commission met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m. with David E. Finley, Chairman, presiding.

Members present: David E. Finley
Felix W. de Weldon
Peter Hurd
Hideo Sasaki
Ralph Walker

Staff: L.R.Wilson, Secretary
Charles H. Atherton,
Asst. Secretary
C.L. Martin, Counsel
Susan E. Bennett, Adm.Asst.
Recorder: Mrs. Haines Dennis

SUBMISSIONS-REVIEWS-INTERVIEWS

1. General Services Administration, Public Buildings Service

a. National Air Museum, Adams and Jefferson Drives, Between 4th and 6th Streets, on the Mall - Preliminary Studies

Prior to hearing the presentation by representatives of the General Services Administration and the Smithsonian Institution, Mr. Walter Louchheim, member of the National Capital Planning Commission, reported to the members that the Planning Commission, at its meeting on September 13 had passed a resolution authorizing its Chairman, Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe, to advise the Bureau of the Budget that the Planning Commission wished to raise several questions concerning the appropriateness of the Mall site, the estimated cost in relation to the facility to be provided, and problems of traffic, access, and parking. The Planning Commission in fact reserved the right to reconsider its previous approval of the Mall site in view of developments since the time of approval of the site. The members of the Commission were glad to learn of the action of the National Capital Planning Commission, because the Commission itself had opposed this site for an Aviation Museum when hearings were held on the legislation in 1958.

Mr. James Bradley, Assistant Secretary of the Smithsonian, after briefly referring to the renderings showing the proposed distribution of the exhibition space in the building, explained that the site on the Mall was chosen on the recommendation of the Air Museum Advisory Board, as the best of several proposed locations because of its accessibility to visitors and the need for physical space to exhibit planes. In answer to a question, Mr. Bradley conceded that a larger site would allow

a greater degree of flexibility in arrangement and design, but he said that there was an overriding consideration in favor of the Mall site because it is in close proximity to the other Smithsonian Institution's buildings and readily accessible to visitors. Also, he said that the Air Museum would select from its collection for exhibition those planes which were of continuing historical or technological interest, and that the other exhibits would be rotated periodically with planes stored at Silver Hill, Maryland. The Smithsonian was of the opinion that the public would rather see a few selected exhibits than an overwhelming number.

The Museum would be built with public funds. Mr. Bradley also stated that it was proposed to exhibit some missiles outdoors in a sunken courtyard along the Independence Avenue facade of the building but not on the Mall side. The Commission did not think that missiles or rockets should be displayed outside the building facing either the Mall or Independence Avenue.

Although it was not part of the present submission, the Commission was assured that the design of the exterior and interior of the building would compare favorably with the National Gallery of Art and the new Museum of History and Technology; and it was stressed that the Act of Congress authorizing the Air Museum provided that its design must be approved by the Commission of Fine Arts.

The members of the Commission agreed that the layouts as presented would be satisfactory for exhibiting a prescribed number of planes, but they agreed that the Mall site left much to be desired for a well-rounded museum of flight. The presentation was mainly for information on the progress of developing a design. EXHIBIT A

b. Federal Triangle, Internal Revenue Building (Courtyard A) - Proposed Cooling Tower - Revised Design

Mr. J. Rowland Snyder, Acting Deputy Assistant Director for Design and Construction, Public Buildings Service, reviewed previous actions of the Commission and explained that the present design for a cooling tower of reinforced concrete of the same height as the building, located in the center of Courtyard A, was dictated by the need for vehicular access through the Courtyard, and by the engineering requirement that the tower be designed to permit air to be drawn into the bottom and expelled through the top. He pointed out that only the lower part of the tower would be visible to the public through an archway on Twelfth Street, N.W.

Mr. Sasaki thought that a more archeological solution incorporating the machinery within the walls would be superior, but the members all agreed that the design was superior to the design last submitted and

and disapproved in February, 1961. They thought raising the mass of the structure tended to lessen the appearance of occupying an unnecessarily large volume for the size of the courtyard, while permitting traffic circulation in the courtyard. It was suggested that the texture of the exterior surface of the reinforced concrete structure should be carefully controlled, and the members requested that plans for texturing the surface be submitted before construction is begun.

The design was approved as presented. The Chairman was authorized to prepare a letter setting forth the Commission's recommendations.

EXHIBIT B

2. Pan American Health Organization Headquarters Building, Square 59, Virginia Avenue, 22d and 23d Street, N.W.

Sr. Roman Fresnedo Siri and Mr. Louis Justament, architects, presented drawings and renderings showing the further development of the design of the building which the Commission had considered previously on December 20, 1961.

Sr. Siri explained that the Health Organization had acceded to the Commission's objections to the use of aluminum elements on the facades, particularly on the exterior of the circular auditorium; and stated that architectural concrete would be substituted.in the exterior treatment of the auditorium. In order to avoid too great a monotony in the wall surfaces the facade of the office tower had been revised to include balconies, with bronze railings and bronze doors, at the second floor level.

The Commission approved the revisions to the design with a request that the final working drawings and the design of any exterior sculpture be submitted.

The Chairman was authorized to prepare a letter to the Director of the Pan American Health Organization setting forth the Commission's recommendations.

EXHIBIT C

3. National Cultural Center Board

National Cultural Center - Revised Plans

The officials of the Board of Trustees and Mr. Edward Stone, architect, presented in open session, the design for a new and smaller scheme for the proposed National Cultural Center to be located on a site facing the Potomac River between the approach roads of the Theodore Roosevelt Bridge and F Street, Northwest.

Mr. Stone used a series of large drawings and a scale model which

had been prepared to use in a fund-raising campaign starting in October. He compared the design of the old curvelinear scheme, holding three large auditoria and 2 smaller halls, with the new rectangular scheme containing three large auditoria. The new scheme made full use of the roof and extended only to the river's edge, instead of projecting over the water as the first scheme had. Notably different was the treatment of Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway which passed directly under a wide terrace overlooking the river, without having to be relocated in a curve around the building as the first scheme had required. Mr. Stone also felt that the new scheme related itself better to the Inner Loop Freeway on the east side and provided wide access for motor cars to the entrance lobbies on that side. Access to parking for 1500 cars could be had from the Parkway.

After congratulating Mr. Stone on his drawings and model, and after expressing hope for the success of the fund-raising campaign, the Commission went into closed session to discuss the more technical features of the design. Mr. Corrin Strong; Mr. Ralph Becker, General Counsel; and Mr. J. Kieffer, Secretary, National Cultural Center Board; and Mr. Walter Louchheim, member of the National Capital Planning Commission, took part in the discussion. Mr. Louchheim brought out the fact that Mr. Stone's design occupied more land than had been allotted by the Congress and that this additional land was yet to be acquired. He said that it might be necessary to request the 88th Congress to amend the metes and bounds description of the site in the Act of Congress to include additional land, part of which was owned by the Island Vista Corporation, developers of the Watergate Project, and part by the Watergate Restaurant.

In reply to a member's question regarding the impact of the Watergate development on his design, Mr. Stone said that he was not familiar with the plans for the Watergate Project, but that he had no objection to the form of the proposed buildings so long as the height did not greatly exceed 138 feet, the height of the Cultural Center building. Mr. Stone also pointed out that the Cultural Center would be 18 inches lower than the Lincoln Memorial and would not, in his opinion, detract from it.

In response to a question about the effect on the building of the approach roads to the Theodore Roosevelt Bridge, Mr. Stone showed the members/a plan of the approach roads that the Center building would be 200 feet from the approach roads at the nearest point, 350 feet at the center and 500 feet at the north end. The new design would be somewhat further from the roadways than the original design of the building was.

Thereafter, in executive session, the members agreed that serious doubts still existed in their minds about the cramped site and its remoteness. Reservations were also held regarding the arrangement of the auditoria and the general design of the building. It was determined to approve the general concept of the plan in order not to impede the

fund raising campaign and to express the continued interest of the Commission in its development in the future.

The Chairman was authorized to prepare a letter to the Chairman of the Cultural Center Board setting forth the Commission's views.

EXHIBIT D

Thereafter, at 12:30 p.m. the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

C. L. Martin

C. L. Martin
Counsel

21 September 1962

Dear Mr. Boutin:

The Commission of Fine Arts, at its meeting on 19 September, considered the preliminary plans and sections showing the proposed disposition of exhibition space in the National Aviation Museum. Mr. J. Rowland Snyder, Acting Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Design and Construction, and Mr. James Bradley, Assistant Secretary, Smithsonian Institution, presented the drawings for the information of the Commission. Although the architectural features of the building were not under consideration at this time, the architectural mass of the building was clearly evident from the cubical spaces of the exhibition areas.

There was general agreement that such a Museum of Flight was desirable, but the members felt that the architectural limitations on the building at this site would be restrictive on the number and kinds of exhibits that could be shown. They were also definitely of the opinion that this is not a site for rockets, even on the Independence Avenue facade as suggested.

The Commission also noted that the National Capital Planning Commission had expressed reservations about the use of a site on the Mall for this purpose, which would require adequate parking facilities for motor cars.

The members of the Commission were glad to see the plans at an early stage of the design.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

Honorable Bernard L. Boutin
Administrator
General Services Administration
Washington 25, D. C.

EXHIBIT A

EXHIBIT A

25 September 1962

Dear Mr. Boutin:

The Commission of Fine Arts, at its meeting on 19 September, considered revised sketches for a cooling tower which will be located in Courtyard A, Internal Revenue Building, Federal Triangle. Mr. J. Rowland Snyder, Acting Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Design and Construction, and Mr. M. X. Wilberding, engineer for the project, presented the new design consisting of a free-standing conical structure of reinforced concrete.

The Commission considered the design superior to the others that have been proposed and approved it as presented. The use of a reinforced concrete structure in such an important position in the Federal Triangle will require special care that the texture of the exterior surfaces of the concrete be carefully controlled. It was suggested that the curving surfaces be marked horizontally at intervals. Such marking may tend to reduce the impression of the size of the structure, which is much larger than the Commission anticipated it would be. The members of the Commission would like to see the plans for marking and texturing the concrete before the concrete for the walls is poured.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

Honorable Bernard L. Boutin
Administrator
General Services Administration
Washington 25, D. C.

EXHIBIT B

EXHIBIT B

26 September 1962

Dear Mr. Horwitz:

The Commission of Fine Arts, at its meeting on 19 September, considered further development of the design for the proposed Headquarters Building of the Pan American Health Organization which will be located on Virginia Avenue between 22d and 23d Streets, Northwest. Sr. Roman Fresnedo Siri and Mr. Louis Justement, architects, presented the revised sketches.

The revisions to the design involved the expression on the exterior of the multi-story building of the large conference rooms on the second floor; the connection of the multi-story building to the low circular auditorium building; and the design of the metal grillwork for the exterior treatment of the auditorium. The members of the Commission approved the revised designs as presented.

As this building is an important one and will occupy a prominent site in the plan of Washington, the Commission hopes to see the final working drawings before construction begins, as well as the design of any exterior sculpture to be located on the site or mounted directly on the building.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

Mr. Abraham Horwitz
Director
Pan American Health Organization
1501 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W.
Washington 6, D. C.

EXHIBIT C

EXHIBIT C

20 September 1962

Dear Mr. Stevens:

At the meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts on 19 September 1962, Mr. Edward Stone, architect, showed the new plans which he has prepared for the proposed National Cultural Center.

The Commission of Fine Arts approved the plans as presented, and congratulated Mr. Stone on the splendid presentation which will be used in the fund-raising campaign starting in October.

The members of the Commission will follow the fund raising campaign with great interest, and will be glad to work further with Mr. Stone on the development of the final designs.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

Honorable Roger L. Stevens
Chairman
National Cultural Center
718 Jackson Place, N.W.
Washington 25, D. C.

Copy to: The President

EXHIBIT D

EXHIBIT D